

**Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General  
23 February 2011

Original: English

**Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific****Sixty-seventh session**

Bangkok, 19-25 May 2011

Item 3 (d) of the provisional agenda

**Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of  
the Commission, including the work of the ESCAP  
regional institutions: Environment and development****Report of the Ministerial Conference on Environment  
and Development on its sixth session***Summary*

The Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific was organized by ESCAP and hosted by the Government of Kazakhstan in Astana. The Conference met at the senior official level from 27 to 29 September and at the ministerial level on 1 and 2 October 2010. It was attended by ministers and heads of delegation from 46 ESCAP member States, as well as representatives of United Nations and other international organizations, regional and subregional non-governmental organizations, academia and the private sector from the Asian and Pacific region—over 800 participants in all. The Conference adopted three main outcome documents—the Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2010, the Regional Implementation Plan for Sustainable Development in Asia and Pacific, 2011-2015, and the Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative: Europe-Asia-Pacific Partnership for the Implementation of “Green Growth”—which will guide regional development policy-setting through 2015 and beyond.

The Commission may wish to review and endorse the outcomes of the Conference as one of the key inputs of the Asian and Pacific region to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, which is scheduled to be held in Brazil in 2012.

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# **I. Matters calling for action by the Commission or brought to its attention**

## **A. Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2010**

*We, the ministers for environment and development and heads of delegations of the members and associate members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP),*

*Having met in Astana on 1 and 2 October 2010 at the sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2010,*

*Reaffirming* our commitment to the implementation of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development<sup>1</sup> and the provisions of Agenda 21,<sup>2</sup> the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,<sup>3</sup> in particular the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation,<sup>4</sup> which incorporates the priority initiatives of the Phnom Penh Regional Platform on Sustainable Development for Asia and the Pacific,<sup>5</sup> the 2005 World Summit, where the Millennium Development Goals were agreed upon, the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,<sup>6</sup> the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States<sup>7</sup> and the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building,<sup>8</sup>

1. *Recognize* that:

(a) For many developing countries, poverty eradication, achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development are paramount goals;

(b) Green growth, as appropriately adapted to country-specific circumstances and as understood in the context of sustainable development, is one of the approaches for supporting rapid economic growth, the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and environmental sustainability;

(c) Several major crises have hit the Asian and Pacific region: the economic crisis triggered by the financial meltdown, the price volatility of key resources, the ecological problems generated by dwindling natural capital, including water and food resources, and climate change induced natural disasters that have created additional burdens for the countries of Asia and the Pacific, especially the most vulnerable ones and the least developed countries, to attain their overall socio-economic development. These crises call for a shift in the development paradigm towards “inclusive and sustainable growth” patterns;

(d) Asia and the Pacific, the fastest-growing region in the world, with the largest number of people (950 million) living in poverty, whose

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<sup>1</sup> *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex I.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, annex II.

<sup>3</sup> See *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, resolution 2, annex.

<sup>5</sup> E/CN.17/2002/PC.2/8.

<sup>6</sup> *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

<sup>7</sup> *Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louis, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.II.A.4 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

<sup>8</sup> Adopted at the High-level Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on an Intergovernmental Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building at its third session, held in Bali, Indonesia, on 4 December 2004.

demand for food, energy, water and natural resources is continuing to grow rapidly and, yet, the basic needs of millions of people remain unmet;

(e) The sectoral growth in transport, waste and chemical use is increasing the ecological footprint of the region;

(f) The risk from climate change has increased due to higher temperatures and the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events;

(g) Air, water, land and biodiversity in ecosystems are essential for supporting economies and societies alike in the Asian and Pacific region;

(h) Unsustainable consumption and production patterns could put increasing pressure on the carrying capacity and result in declining quality of life;

(i) The region needs to continue rapid economic growth in order to lift millions of people out of poverty and achieve Millennium Development Goal 1. At the same time, it is vital to keep environmental sustainability high on the agenda, as proposed in Millennium Development Goal 7. The pace of growth and environmental vigilance must be maintained and one must not be sacrificed for the other;

(j) The paradigm of sustainable development needs to be promoted through, among others, the green growth approach, with due regard for equity and country-specific circumstances, harmonizing rapid economic growth and environmental sustainability;

(k) Education for sustainable development is an important instrument that can assist ESCAP member States in addressing the several major crises that have hit the region and in support of a smooth transition towards green growth;

(l) Regional initiatives, such as the Kitakyushu Initiative for a Clean Environment<sup>9</sup> and the Seoul Initiative on Environmentally Sustainable Economic Growth (Green Growth),<sup>10</sup> as well as initiatives undertaken by the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation<sup>11</sup> and other regional and national initiatives of ESCAP member States provide excellent examples of experiences in promoting new approaches to economic growth and have created the necessary impetus to strengthen region-wide cooperative action.

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<sup>9</sup> Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, *Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific 2000, Kitakyushu, Japan, 31 August-5 September 2000: Ministerial Declaration, Regional Action Programme (2001-2005) and Kitakyushu Initiative for a Clean Environment (ST/ESCAP/2096)* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.01.II.F.12), Part Three.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., *The Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2005 (ST/ESCAP/2379)* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.II.F.31), Annex III.

<sup>11</sup> See the Thimphu Statement on Climate Change, adopted at the sixteenth summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, held in Thimphu on 28 and 29 April 2010. Available from [www.sixteenthsaarcsummit.bt](http://www.sixteenthsaarcsummit.bt).

2. *Intend to:*

(a) Consider creating an enabling socio-economic environment to drive the changes needed to foster and promote a sustainable development path;

(b) Engage all stakeholders to support and speed up the required changes through appropriate measures for:

- (i) Improving consumer awareness and creating new consumer consciousness about making informed choices for environmentally sustainable products, services and lifestyles;
- (ii) Supporting and encouraging new consumer behaviour by using tools, such as, among others, demand-side management measures, as appropriate, to country-specific circumstances to enhance sustainable consumption and lifestyles;
- (iii) Developing national policies, strategies, action plans and relevant activities as appropriate in formal and informal environmental educational settings for children and youth, based on the main principles provided under the education for sustainable development framework;
- (iv) Establishing a network for the implementation of regional and subregional environmental education projects; developing and integrating frameworks for education on sustainable development at the national level to facilitate the implementation of regional and subregional initiatives and action plans for sustainable development;
- (v) Promoting the “harmony with nature” approach while respecting and strengthening the Asian and Pacific traditional lifestyle, cultural and spiritual values;
- (vi) Promoting at the national level, within country-specific circumstance, a mechanism for the “polluter pays” principle, and efficient management of natural resources.

(c) Creating and further replicating successful models for partnership with the private sector in implementing the required fundamental changes, while encouraging:

- (i) Investments to promote efficient use of resources, innovation and environmental infrastructure;
- (ii) Exchange of information on polluter pays principle practices, deployment, application and transfer of technology and know-how in developing national capacities for achieving sustainable consumption and production;
- (iii) Public awareness and investment in related research programmes and assistance to vulnerable populations adversely affected by climate change.

(d) Considering, wherever appropriate and feasible and in accordance with national circumstances, the incorporation of environmental

costs into market prices and using, economic and market-based instruments that are supportive of sustainable development.

3. *Decide* to work together, as appropriate, towards:

(a) Strengthening regional and subregional cooperation for the promotion of environmentally sustainable economic growth, or green growth, as one of the prerequisites for attaining the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development;

(b) Encouraging joint research on the development and application of policies and tools, including environmentally sound technologies and taking all practical steps to promote and facilitate, as appropriate, the transfer of or access to environmentally sound technologies;

(c) Promoting knowledge-sharing networks to exchange experiences and analyses, lessons learned from sustainable development pilot projects highlighting pro-poor, pro-environment growth;

(d) Increasing technical assistance and exchanges of information and experience sharing in eco-tourism, waste management and recycling, disaster risk management etc. among the member countries with focus on countries in need;

(e) Promoting capacity-building and technology transfer initiatives, to encourage and facilitate the use of eco-efficient, resource-efficient and green technologies in economies in transition and developing countries, in particular small island developing States, mountain, landlocked developing countries, and least developed countries, particularly those that are the most vulnerable countries in Asia and the Pacific;

(f) Implementing the Regional Implementation Plan for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2011-2015,<sup>12</sup> and regional and subregional initiatives, including the Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative<sup>13</sup> and the establishment of a Europe-Asia-Pacific partnership;

(g) Emphasizing the necessary flow of new technologies and transfer of know-how and technologies for capacity building to developing countries in the Asia and Pacific region;

(h) Investing in the protection of the natural resource base of economic and social significance, which is critical for food security, environment and sustainable development;

(i) Promoting the sustainable development path as an approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation, and enhancing the resilience of society and the economy to natural calamities and unforeseen shocks;

(j) Promoting sustainable urban development and infrastructure;

(k) Adopting a post-2010 biodiversity target at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Nagoya, Japan, in October 2010, and achieving a significant reduction in the current rate of biodiversity loss, remembering that the 2010 biodiversity target has not yet been met;

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<sup>12</sup> See chap. I, sect. B.

<sup>13</sup> See chap I, sect. C.

(l) Combating various environmental threats by strengthening initiatives at the regional, subregional and national levels for monitoring, evaluation, assessment, energy cooperation, pollution control and nature conservation as appropriate;

(m) Promoting and fostering regional cooperation for the sustainable usage of natural resources in the Asia-Pacific region;

(n) Promoting synergies with ESCAP and other development partners and global and regional strategies, to develop green growth strategies to address the particular and unique vulnerabilities of small island developing States and least developed countries;

(o) Supporting soil resources development to ensure sustainable agriculture and increasing eco-system productivity.

4. *Request* the Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to assist member countries in implementing the provisions of the present declaration and to submit a mid-term review and a final review to the seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development, in 2015.

5. *Invite* donor countries, relevant United Nations bodies and agencies and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, in particular, and multilateral financial institutions, other intergovernmental organizations, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society to:

(a) Provide full support, including financial and technical support, for the implementation of the Regional Implementation Plan for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2011-2015 as well as other interregional, regional and subregional initiatives, including the Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative;

(b) Assist countries and subregions which are most vulnerable to climate change and under continuous threat of natural disasters in their immediate and long-term adaptation needs.

6. *Agree* to convene the seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific in the year 2015.

7. *Express* our sincere appreciation to the people and the Government of Kazakhstan for the warm hospitality and excellent organization of the Conference.

## **B. Regional Implementation Plan for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2011-2015**

### **Introduction**

The Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific was held in Astana on 1 and 2 October 2010. The Conference adopted the Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific 2010. This Regional Implementation Plan for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific 2011–2015 is guided by the principles contained in the Astana Ministerial Declaration and presents options for action, taking into account the diversity and the development needs and capabilities of countries.

## **Objectives of the Regional Implementation Plan**

1. The main goals of the Regional Implementation Plan are to enable ESCAP and other organizations to further assist member countries in the implementation of programmes and for member countries in this region to use such elements of this plan for implementation as they may deem appropriate by promoting regional, subregional and national capacities for achieving sustainable development. To this end, the plan identifies action areas, and the roles of key stakeholders in order to enhance the capacities of countries to eradicate poverty, achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 in the context of sustainable development. The Regional Implementation Plan does not constitute in any manner a mandatory policy framework. It is only an indicative list of actions for provision of support to member countries by ESCAP and other organizations based on priorities identified by the countries themselves, in consideration of the Regional Implementation Plan. It is the prerogative of respective member States to choose relevant policy options according to their national circumstance, as appropriate.

### **I. Programme areas (sectoral dimensions)**

#### **A. Harmonizing rapid economic growth, employment generation and environmental sustainability**

##### **Action areas**

2. Action areas for harmonizing rapid economic growth with environmental sustainability in support of sustainable development may include, among others:

(a) Promoting the use of life cycle analysis, resource efficiency and material flow assessment;

(b) Promoting the process of mainstreaming environmental programmes into national development plans;

(c) Promoting the use of strategic and integrated environmental assessments at the level of national planning;

(d) Incorporating environmental costs into market prices and using economic and market-based instruments that are supportive of sustainable development and green growth as defined above;

(e) Promotion of eco-efficient innovation through public and private investment in research and development of environmentally sound technologies, including through, among others, green public procurement;

(f) Further development and application of eco-efficiency indicators for the formulation of policy that stimulates eco-efficient and resource-efficient productivity;

(g) Creation of an enabling environment and mechanisms to promote green technologies and investments in innovation, as well as development, access and transfer of environmentally sound technologies at the national and international levels;

(h) Development of a circular economy, stimulated by government-initiated investments and procurement, eco-industrial parks and



sustainable waste management: waste-for-wealth and waste-as-resource-for-products;

- (i) Promotion of corporate social responsibility and green jobs.

## **B. Promoting sustainable urban development**

### **Action areas**

3. Action areas in promoting sustainable urban development may include, among others:

- (a) Sustainable urban planning and design, including promotion of eco-efficient infrastructure, particularly mass transit and public transport, green buildings and water infrastructure;

- (b) Integrated resource recovery as an economically viable approach to municipal wastewater and solid waste;

- (c) More effective harnessing of conventional and innovative financing measures for sustainable urban development, including, among others, the promotion of pro-poor and environmentally sustainable pricing policies for water and energy services; encouraging financing for urban housing and infrastructure that is accessible to the poor; tapping into social ventures and public-private partnerships, and supporting new international financing policies, including, among others, capacity building to enable local governments to access carbon financing;

- (d) Promoting sustainable and eco-efficient approaches to housing, including, among others, through the promotion of pro-poor eco-settlements;

- (e) Capacity-building for local governments and other urban stakeholders to mainstream climate change resilience into urban planning, development and management.

## **C. Enhancing ecological carrying capacity**

### **Action areas**

4. Action areas for enhancing the ecological carrying capacity may include, among others:

- (a) Ensuring that land, marine and freshwater use has equitable poverty reduction benefits and maintains the critical functions of the natural environment, such as the provision of food, fibre and water, flood mitigation, absorption of wastes and maintaining biodiversity, as well as its cultural, spiritual and aesthetic values. Attention should be paid to ecosystems that contribute to climate adaptation and enhance socio-economic resilience. Action will include the establishment of appropriate management arrangements and partnerships and enabling national policy environments;

- (b) Ensuring that attention is paid to the special requirements for the sustainable development of mountain eco-systems in least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States;

(c) Enhancing investments in agricultural and forestry research and development, while considering indigenous knowledge and traditional farming practices, as well as promoting eco-efficient agricultural development, including organic agriculture. The establishment/strengthening of policies that support environmentally sustainable consumption and production patterns in relation to food, fuel, water and agro-industrial products.

## **D. Improving energy resource management for sustainable development**

### **Action areas**

5. Action areas for fostering regional and subregional cooperation through promotion of policy dialogue may include, among others:

(a) Promoting a better understanding of the co-benefit approach that could be used by the energy sector to enhance energy security and achieve sustainable development;

(b) Promoting energy security through strengthening regional and subregional energy cooperation, in particular, in the areas of sustainable usage of energy resources, enhancing energy efficiency and energy conservation, clean energy technologies and development of alternative and renewable energy;

(c) Developing a programme to achieve national goals concerning the expansion of access to energy services through innovative policies and financing schemes, with the participation of various stakeholders;

(d) Expanding access to energy services for the poor may lead to an overall increase in energy consumption in some countries to meet these energy needs; the energy efficiency potential in many of these countries, however, particularly in urban areas, could go a long way towards offsetting this increase in consumption;

(e) Assessing and quantifying energy efficiency and renewable energy potential at the national level;

(f) Integrating the application and utilization of appropriate technologies into sustainable development strategies in assessing their financial implications;

(g) Establishing more innovative financing schemes at the micro- and macro-levels in order to implement strategies for accessing energy services and improving energy efficiency. Further to complement these at the national level by linking them more closely with the emerging carbon market and domestic financing schemes;

(h) Recognizing that development is the main priority in many developing countries in Asia and the Pacific, as one of the options to achieve energy security and sustainable development, more work is needed to provide member States with assistance in pursuing the low-carbon development path. Guidelines should be developed based on existing policies and a clearer analysis of co-benefits, in particular for development.

## **E. Improving water resource management for sustainable development**

### **Action areas**

6. Three major action areas are recognized to address the priorities of sustainable development in the region and subregions, especially those related to the Millennium Development Goals, including the follow-up activities for the International Year of Sanitation:

#### **(a) Programme of action for sustainable economic growth: sustainable urban development and water resources management**

7. This programme of action is expected to include, among others:

(a) Developing a regional strategy based on the experiences and achievements of major existing regional efforts, such as the Kitakyushu Initiative, the Seoul Initiative on Environmentally Sustainable Economic Growth (Green Growth),<sup>14</sup> the ESCAP Development Account project on eco-efficient urban infrastructure and the ESCAP urban community development programme for a new, comprehensive and integrated approach to water resources development in urban areas;

(b) Compiling lessons learned to expand the knowledge base on technologies and approaches that promote eco-efficient water infrastructure in the urban context;

(c) Developing a detailed road map towards sustainable urban development and water resources management;

(d) Strengthening partnership and generating support for this road map, working with Governments, the private sector, international banks and civil society;

(e) Soliciting the support and participation, especially as drivers of this programme, of key stakeholders in existing regional programmes, new initiatives and financing institutions for maximum synergy of regional efforts in urban development.

#### **(b) Programme of action for poverty eradication: provision of urban services to rural areas**

8. This programme may include, among others:

(a) The promotion of modernized irrigation systems, linking up with regional efforts made by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations;

(b) The promotion of water eco-efficiency through rainwater harvesting, decentralization of wastewater management, the provision of urban water services for multiple uses and better household water adequacy;

<sup>14</sup> Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, *The Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2005* (ST/ESCAP/2379) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.II.F.31), Annex III.

(c) The reprioritization of access to water, including safe drinking water, and sanitation as a requirement for human health, productivity and livelihood creation, joining with systematic efforts made by the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

**(c) Programme of action for better resilience**

9. This programme of action may include, among others:

(a) Compiling best practices in the region to support the integration of adaptation measures into the socio-economic development process in the region, with special attention paid to extreme floods and droughts in the region;

(b) Building a network of partners to share and develop required information on extreme water-related events and climate change projections on a scale that provides more detail than those that are currently available in developing countries in order to identify vulnerable areas within the region with better accuracy;

(c) Mobilizing efforts and participation for climate change adaptation;

(d) Assisting least developed countries, small island developing States and mountainous landlocked developing countries in improving forest management, watershed management, land use planning and ridge-to-reef resource management, with special attention paid to the contamination of groundwater and the impacts of climate change on freshwater, glaciers and groundwater resources.

**F. Enhancing the resilience of socio-economic development to climate change**

**Action areas**

10. Priority action areas may include, among others:

(a) Institutional support, capacity-building and technology transfer to facilitate action;

(b) Strengthening institutions and policies to facilitate and empower community action by harnessing local knowledge and bringing together diverse forms of knowledge, including traditional knowledge;

(c) The engagement of people, businesses and communities in monitoring the impacts of climate change and in identifying appropriate solutions, including the implementation of REDD-plus,<sup>15</sup> as well as public awareness and investment in related research programmes and assistance to vulnerable populations adversely affected by climate change;

(d) Investment in the protection of the natural resource base and eco-systems of economic and social significance for food security and sustainable development;

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<sup>15</sup> See <http://www.un-redd.org>.

(e) Enhancing the capacity of people, businesses and communities to adapt to changing conditions, including higher disaster risk and vulnerability.

## **II. Implementation strategy**

11. National-level implementation will be the responsibility of the respective Government. Based on the priorities identified by them, the efforts of Governments would be supported and supplemented by activities at the subregional, regional and global levels. In particular, such assistance could be obtained from regional and international organizations.

### **A. Resource mobilization and partnership-building**

12. Financing is crucial for the implementation of any plan. While it is appropriate and necessary to remind donor countries of their commitments to support the efforts of developing countries to reduce poverty and achieve environmental sustainability, it is also clear that self-financing, innovative financing and partnerships present substantial and immediate opportunities to support efforts to achieve environmentally sustainable economic growth. It is also clear that such efforts, in preventing environmental degradation, will protect future prospects for economic growth, reduce economic loss and in many cases result in net economic benefits. This would reduce the financing gap and place the region in a good position to show commitment to both environmental protection and economic growth objectives.

13. In Asia and the Pacific, there is enormous potential and opportunity (a) to increase eco-efficiency in the production and consumption of resources, (b) to develop and explore markets for environmental technologies, products and services, (c) to establish more effective environmental governance, (d) to redeploy resources, (e) to refine priorities through domestic policy reforms, (f) to develop public-private-civil society partnerships to promote investment in environmental protection, (g) to explore innovative financing mechanisms, such as clean development mechanism projects and debt-for-nature swaps, and (h) to invest in protecting their natural resources capital as a way of ensuring the sustainable provision of environmental goods and services that support economic growth.

### **B. Capacity-building**

14. Each programme area of the plan is strongly focused on capacity-building. Regional organizations such as ESCAP, international organizations such as UNEP and UNDP and development banks such as ADB have played a major role in capacity-building for sustainable development in the region. They have also facilitated regional, multilateral and bilateral cooperation, which is often the most effective means of capacity-building. It is recognized that sustainable development is the long-term objective of members and associate members and that resources should continue to be made available to support capacity-building efforts to this end. However, it is also acknowledged that, without environmentally sustainable economic growth, sustainable development will be difficult to achieve. With this in mind, international and regional organizations may consider refocusing support activities to build the capacity of members and associate members, especially countries with economies in transition and developing countries, in particular small island developing States and least developed countries, which may be facing critical challenges with respect to

the impact of production and consumption patterns on their natural environment.

### **C. Access to and transfer of environmentally sound technologies**

15. Another important approach for the achievement of sustainable development in the region is access to and transfer of technology that is economically viable, environmentally sound and socially acceptable, as recommended in chapter 34 of Agenda 21,<sup>16</sup> and on a concessionary and preferential basis, as called for in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (“Johannesburg Plan of Implementation”).<sup>17</sup> Research, development and training activities conducted by pioneering institutions in the region show that the uptake of technologies that support sustainable development has been slow. However, through the work of such institutions as the International Environmental Technology Centre and the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology and in the expectation that the World Trade Organization will ensure the net benefits of globalization, mechanisms for the achievement of sustainable development, including the flow of additional financing and the transfer of technology, are likely to be strengthened.

### **D. Stakeholder involvement**

16. All stakeholders have an important role to play in the effort to achieve sustainable development. While Governments are expected to take the lead in particular as regards policy coherence, other relevant stakeholders also have important roles to play.

17. Civil society in general and non-governmental organizations in particular have shown a commitment to promoting sustainable development. Their full participation is necessary for the successful implementation of the Regional Implementation Plan. The plan therefore advocates a participatory approach that fully involves non-governmental organizations and civil society in planning and implementation, including decision-making processes.

18. The private sector is already a major force in the economic development of the region and has the potential to play a strong role in protecting the environment and promoting sustainable ecosystem management. Public-private partnerships must be forged in order to internalize environmental costs and promote sustainable production patterns as an integral part of overall development strategies. The private sector can explore and develop markets for environmental goods and services and mobilizing investment.

19. The academic and scientific communities can offer all stakeholders opportunities for guidance on innovative measures for promoting sustainable development.

20. The international community has an important role to play in assisting governments in the region in implementing the necessary changes

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<sup>16</sup> *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

<sup>17</sup> *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap I, resolution 2, annex.

at the national level, in terms of capacity development, technical assistance, technology transfer and financing. Such support on the basis of existing and new modalities should be geared, in particular, towards addressing the special needs of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. Global and regional platforms are needed for exchanges of experience and information on innovative practices. Multilateral and bilateral financial institutions can play an important role in influencing financing decisions in the private sector, which values their ability to enhance the creditworthiness of projects, particularly for long-term infrastructure construction. International trade and investment can also play a key role in mobilizing appropriate technologies and financial resources. Environmentally sustainable economic growth will benefit from an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system.

### **E. Modalities**

21. Priority regional activities involving all of the above stakeholders in assisting countries will include the following:

(a) Undertaking normative and analytical research on emerging issues and innovative solutions to develop policy recommendations and undertaking action research and analysis to develop replicable models;

(b) Catalysing high-level, high-visibility policy recommendations through regional policy dialogues, forums and specially convened ministerial conferences;

(c) Developing the capacity of countries to adapt, replicate and scale up innovative practices and policy initiatives through capacity development and training of trainers, including online training;

(d) Promoting North-South cooperation through the transfer of resources, networking and the exchange of knowledge and experience, as well as through regional and subregional pilot projects, and the transfer of green technologies;

(e) Promoting South-South cooperation through networking and exchange of knowledge and experience, as well as through regional and subregional pilot projects and transfer of green technologies.<sup>18</sup>

### **III. Initiatives**

Important initiatives have been developed over the years to promote sustainable development within the United Nations system and at regional and subregional forums. The significant efforts made and the results already achieved highlight the importance of actions at all levels and call for their further development, as well as the need for interregional, intraregional and international cooperation in this respect. New and ongoing initiatives are important for sustainable development at the national level and need to be implemented by the countries in the region and subregions, taking into account those promoted by various regional and subregional entities. These

<sup>18</sup> The General Assembly, in paragraph 3 of its resolution 62/209 of 19 December 2007, stressed “that South-South cooperation, as an important element of international cooperation for development, offers viable opportunities for developing countries in their individual and collective pursuit of sustained economic growth and sustainable development.”

initiatives may be utilized to prioritize and implement regional and subregional actions.

<b>Asia-Pacific regional initiatives:</b>		<b>Aim and goals are to:</b>
Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative		Facilitate the establishment of a Europe-Asia-Pacific partnership that will outline the blueprints for a shift from the current conventional development patterns to green growth, as defined above
Seoul Initiative on Green Growth		Promote the regional cooperation through capacity building and policy consultation for improving ecological efficiency of economic growth
North and Central Asia	Sustainable Development Strategy for Central Asia (SSDS CA, 5 countries)	Establish regional collaboration, assuring sustainable socio-economic development in parallel with the conservation and rational use of natural resources for present and future generations in the subregion
East and North-East Asia	North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC)	Facilitate cooperation among member States on addressing transboundary environmental challenges and building national capacity for sustainable development
South and South-West Asia	Thimphu Statement on Climate Change (SAARC countries)	Jointly address the dual challenge of the negative impacts of the climate change in pursuing socio-economic development
	Subregional Strategy for the Sustainable Development of South Asia (SSDS SA, 8 countries)	Serve as a long-term policy planning tool. Identifies three main goals: eliminating poverty and creating national security, conserving natural resource endowments and securing an economic base, and strengthening the institutional system. It also sets priorities for cooperation among the South Asian countries, with innovative approaches.
South-East Asia	ASEAN Leaders’ Statement on Joint Response to Climate Change (2010)	Reaffirm the vision of an ASEAN community resilient to climate change and strengthen subregional cooperation through the Joint Response to Climate Change, including ASEAN Climate Change Initiative (ACCI)
	Subregional Strategy for the Sustainable Development of the Greater Mekong Subregion (SSDS GMS, 6 countries)	Set up the long-term vision, goals and targets of the GMS countries with short to middle-term goals intended to achieve the time-bound targets enumerated in the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. The strategic goals are: (i) poverty eradication through sustained and equitable economic growth, (ii) sustainable management of shared environmental resources, and (iii) nurturing human and social capital for sustainable development and the Millennium Development Goals
Pacific region	Pacific Green Growth Partnership	Coordinate among the regional and international organizations in the Pacific, their assistance to exploring and adopting options for green growth, as defined above
	Analysis of and Roadmap on Green Growth for Small Island Developing States	Undertake a Pacific-level analysis of the applicability of the green growth model as well as a draft road map for harnessing support for implementation



#### IV. Review and assessment mechanism

22. The Commission will undertake a periodic review of the progress made in the implementation of the Regional Implementation Plan based on information provided by members and associate members on a voluntary basis, as well as by collaborating international organizations. A midterm review will be carried out for submission to the ESCAP Committee on Environment and Development in 2013. The final review report will be submitted to the seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in 2015

#### C. Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative: Europe-Asia-Pacific Partnership for the Implementation of “Green Growth”

##### I. Preamble

1. The Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative is intended to build on the commitments made to implement the relevant resolutions and recommendations of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation,<sup>19</sup> the Phnom Penh Regional Platform on Sustainable Development for Asia and the Pacific (E/CN.17/2002/PC.2/8), Agenda 21,<sup>20</sup> the Millennium Development Goals, the sixty-first session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)<sup>21</sup> and other United Nations, global, international and regional agreements, as well as the fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific<sup>22</sup> and its Regional Implementation Plan for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2006-2010,<sup>23</sup> the sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” (see ECE/BELGRADE.CONF/2007/8), and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.<sup>24</sup>

2. Regional activities have been initiated by ESCAP and the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) to assist countries in the implementation of the above.

3. It is important to consider the reasons and opportunities for strengthening partnerships between Asia and the Pacific and Europe in carrying out regional processes and activities, while addressing sustainable development, environmental sustainability and shared ecosystems.

<sup>19</sup> Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (*Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex).

<sup>20</sup> *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

<sup>21</sup> See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 19* (E/2005/39), chap. IV.

<sup>22</sup> See ESCAP, *The Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2005* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.II.F.31).

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, annex II.

<sup>24</sup> *Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louis, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.II.A.4 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

4. The Asian and Pacific countries need additional resources, new technologies, and programmes and mechanisms for technology transfer to improve environmental protection.

5. The Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative is modelled on successfully implemented regional initiatives, such as the Kitakyushu Initiative for Clean Environment<sup>25</sup> and the Seoul Initiative on Environmentally Sustainable Economic Growth (Green Growth).<sup>26</sup>

6. Due account should be taken of the statement of the Interstate Council for Sustainable Development of Central Asia at the sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe”, held in Belgrade in 2007, which noted the expedience of cooperation among countries of the European Union and the Asian and Pacific region.<sup>27</sup>

7. Preparatory activities for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, scheduled to be held in 2012, should be begun, including the development of the Asian and Pacific regional position on the main themes to be discussed—the green economy within the context of sustainable development and the eradication of poverty, and the institutional framework for sustainable development.

## II. Background

8. The concept of green growth meets the strategic needs of the countries in the Asian and Pacific and European regions. The green growth approach, which is an innovative strategic framework for achieving sustainable development, was recommended at the fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development as an instrument for harmonizing activities on Millennium Development Goals 1 (poverty reduction) and 7 (environmental sustainability).

9. Countries in the Asian and Pacific region are facing a series of persistent and emerging challenges, such as food, energy, financial, economic and climate crises, and poverty, the impacts of which have not been fully overcome. Various reports warn of future crises that may be even more challenging, as they may involve crossing planetary boundaries.

10. Vulnerable livelihoods are under increasing threat and basic needs, such as food, water and energy, are further out of reach for many. Projected environmental change, a skyrocketing demand for resources and increasingly scarce ecosystem services underpin socio-economic uncertainty, signalling the deepening of social divides and vulnerability in the future in the most affected countries. New kinds of ecosystem insecurities are emerging, including those related to water issues.

<sup>25</sup> Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, *Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific 2000, Kitakyushu, Japan, 31 August-5 September 2000: Ministerial Declaration, Regional Action Programme (2001-2005) and Kitakyushu Initiative for a Clean Environment (ST/ESCAP/2096)* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.01.II.F.12), Part Three.

<sup>26</sup> Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, *The Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2005 (ST/ESCAP/2379)* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.II.F.31), Annex III.

<sup>27</sup> Available from [www.unece.org/env/ece/Belgrade/Proceedings/Item5a/KeynoteKyrgyzstanCAI\\_Ru.pdf](http://www.unece.org/env/ece/Belgrade/Proceedings/Item5a/KeynoteKyrgyzstanCAI_Ru.pdf).

11. Urbanization in the Asian and Pacific region is inevitable and it is happening on a massive, historically unprecedented scale and pace. This has enormous and interlinked economic, social and environmental repercussions. The way in which cities are planned and developed has implications for decades ahead, as it can lock them into an unsustainable urban development pattern and will have a significant bearing on the future of both regions and the planet as a whole. Over 50 per cent of urban residents living in low-lying coastal zones, cities and towns in Asia and the Pacific are particularly vulnerable to climate change.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, as 35 per cent of urban residents in the region were still living in slums and squatter settlements as of 2005,<sup>29</sup> access to housing and basic environmental infrastructure and services is a key persistent issue.

12. As a whole, the Asian and the Pacific region has been improving its resource efficiency in recent years. However, while rapid industrialization and economic growth have led to a reduction in absolute poverty in some countries, they have also led to the unsustainable use of natural resources and contributed to greater CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, ecosystem degradation, and disparities between individuals and regions.

13. Achieving ecologically sustainable and inclusive economic growth that results in sustainable development is now more important than ever before. The green growth approach is increasingly important for building competitiveness, environmental sustainability and resilience, and for managing risk. Many changes and shifts from the ever-increasing quantity of economic growth towards the quality of economic growth are required and are only possible with close partnership and cooperation among government, private sector and civil society actors. Inclusive and adaptive governance approaches will be needed both to achieve this and to build adaptive capacity and resilience to some of the most pressing challenges facing the region.

14. As the host country for the sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific and the seventh Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe”, which is scheduled to be held in 2011, Kazakhstan would like to facilitate the process of bridging environmental policies and best practices between the European and Asian and the Pacific regions, which will stimulate qualitative and quantitative shifts towards greener, more competitive and more inclusive growth.

### **III. Goal and purposes of the Astana “Green Bridge” initiative**

15. The overarching goal of the Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative is to facilitate the establishment of a Europe-Asia-Pacific partnership that will outline the blueprints for a shift from the current conventional development patterns to green growth.

16. The Initiative aims to strengthen intersectoral, intraregional and interregional cooperation using the following approaches:

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<sup>28</sup> United Nations Human Settlements Programme, *State of the World's Cities 2008/2009: Harmonious Cities* (London and Sterling, VA, Earthscan, 2008), Table 3.3.1.

<sup>29</sup> Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, *2009 Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.10.II.F.1), p. 14.

(a) Catalysing high-level, high-visibility policy dialogues on emerging and persistent issues;

(b) Undertaking normative and analytical research on emerging and cutting-edge policy solutions and tools;

(c) Building the capacity of policymakers to further develop, adopt and implement such policies while taking stock of the best available practices and methodologies, and legislative and economic instruments;

(d) Developing new and strengthening existing mechanisms for technology transfer and investments that will contribute to the preservation of Asian and Pacific ecosystems with global environmental significance;

(e) Developing mechanisms to attract green investments and innovative environmental management approaches, including cross-border adjustments and the application of economic incentives, taxes and fees.

17. The overall implementation of the Initiative will be based on the application of the green growth policy tools developed by ESCAP following the recommendations of the fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development and in partnership with other United Nations agencies and partners, such as the Asian Development Bank, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Health Organization, as well as the Asia-Europe Environment Forum and the instruments of the “Environment for Europe” process.

#### **IV. Thematic and policy areas for cooperation**

18. The Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative proposes a number of programmatic areas and activities to operationalize the Europe-Asia-Pacific partnership.

##### **Thematic area 1. Eco-efficient use of natural resources and investment in ecosystem services**

19. This thematic area focuses on enhancing the eco-efficiency of natural resource use and investment in ecosystem services.

##### **Policy areas**

20. Activities would be carried out in the following policy areas:

(a) Technical, information and expert support for the development and strengthening of transboundary cooperation in environmental monitoring, integrated natural resource management, the use of integrated assessment tools and the planning of ecosystem usage;

(b) Promotion of economic instruments for the protection of biodiversity, including for sustainable fishing, and for the prevention of anthropogenic pollution of land, water and ocean ecosystems, in particular in the context of small islands;

(c) Promotion of best practices for integrated ecosystem management and the implementation of new models of ecosystem management and the efficient use of natural resources;

(d) Development of a monitoring system for the efficient use of natural resources, to be applied in international trade agreements;

(e) Development and implementation of sustainable management practices for nature reserves and parks of global environment significance, together with international organizations and other partners;

(f) Improvement of access to knowledge on available and secure water resource management technologies and mechanisms for the transfer of these technologies.

## **Thematic area 2. Low-carbon development and adaptation to climate change**

21. This thematic area focuses on policy options to improve eco-efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including low-carbon green growth development to promote mitigation, and to promote climate change adaptation and resilience.

### **Policy areas**

22. Activities would be carried out in the following policy areas:

(a) Sharing good practices, scientific knowledge, technologies and cutting-edge experience in improving resilience and adaptation to, as well as mitigation of, climate change, including innovation for energy efficiency;

(b) Provision of a platform and a pool of experts to support the development of regional projects addressing adaptation, mitigation and resilience, while also creating a mechanism for technology transfer;

(c) Sharing information and providing methodical assistance in the development of national policies and strategies for adaptation to climate change, including a review of fossil fuel subsidies.

## **Thematic area 3. Promotion of sustainable urban development**

23. This thematic area focuses on policy options to address current unsustainable urban development patterns.

### **Policy areas**

24. Activities would be carried out in the following policy areas:

(a) Promotion of inclusive and sustainable urban planning and design;

(b) Promotion of green buildings;

(c) Promotion of low-carbon public transport;

(d) Promotion of an eco-efficient water infrastructure and a “wastewater revolution”;

- (e) Promotion of sustainable management of urban wastes;
- (f) Promotion and development of low-carbon, pro-poor housing and settlements.

#### **Thematic area 4. Promotion of green business and green technology**

25. This thematic area focuses on a number of policies that can drive the greening of business, spur eco-efficient innovation and production, enable the transfer of green technologies and green investments, and promote sustainable products and services to enhance people's livelihoods.

##### **Policy areas**

26. Activities would be carried out in the following policy areas:

- (a) Sustainable/green public procurement;
- (b) Creation of an enabling environment and mechanisms to promote green technologies and investments in innovation at the national and international levels;
- (c) Promotion of an eco-friendly pricing system, including green tax and budget reform;
- (d) Development of a circular economy, stimulated by government-initiated investments and procurement, eco-industrial parks, and sustainable waste management—waste-for-wealth and waste-as-resource-for-products;
- (e) Promotion of corporate social responsibility and decent green jobs;
- (f) Promotion of eco-efficient innovation through public investment in research and development.

#### **Thematic area 5. Promotion of sustainable lifestyles and improvement of quality of life**

27. This thematic area focuses on policy options that promote a shift from inefficient and intensive industrialization patterns to low-carbon green growth and that will create long-term benefits for the quality of life of society for generations ahead and reduce the ecological deficit to future generations through the exchange of sustainable consumption and production practices between the regions of Europe and Asia and the Pacific.

##### **Policy areas**

28. Activities would be carried out in the following policy areas:

- (a) Sustainable production policies targeting producers:
  - (i) Improve the use of life cycle analysis, resource efficiency and material flow assessment on the level of enterprises;

- (ii) Improve the use of strategic and integrated environmental assessments on the level of national planning;
  - (iii) Further develop and apply eco-efficiency indicators for policy formulation stimulating eco-efficient productivity.
- (b) Sustainable consumption policies targeting consumers:
  - (i) Promote and further develop alternative development measures to be used in conjunction with the traditional gross domestic product and to assess the performance of government, the business sector and other sectors;
  - (ii) Develop information disclosure, eco-labelling and sustainable green advertising as tools to create an informed consumer.
- (c) Sharing of knowledge and best practices through the Regional Help Desk on Sustainable Consumption and Production in Asia and the Pacific.<sup>30</sup>

## **V. Follow-up activities**

29. As a follow-up to the sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development, the Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative will commence with the holding of additional consultations with ESCAP member States (associate members are also welcome) from Asia and the Pacific and countries of the European region, international organizations, and ESCAP, ECE, the European Union, the Asia-Europe Environment Forum and other partners to develop the work programme and activities of the Initiative for the period 2011-2020.

30. In addition, and to support activities under the Initiative, the Government of Kazakhstan, in cooperation with interested partners, is offering to host a “Green Bridge” office. The office will also promote the implementation of a Europe-Asia-Pacific partnership for Green Growth.

31. Kazakhstan, in partnership with interested members and associate members of ESCAP, will present the proposed Europe-Asia-Pacific partnership and an implementation plan for the “Green Bridge” Initiative for endorsement at the seventh Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe”, to be held in Astana in 2011.

## **VI. Funding**

32. Financing for the follow-up activities to operationalize the Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative will be mobilized on a voluntary basis through the Government of Kazakhstan, ESCAP and ECE member States, and the international donor community, including such organizations as the Asian Development Bank, the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the United Nations Development Programme, as well as the private sector.

<sup>30</sup> Jointly established by the United Nations Environment Programme and ESCAP and launched in May 2006. Available from [www.scp-help.org](http://www.scp-help.org).

33. Kazakhstan will provide the financial support, as a contribution to facilitating a Europe-Asia-Pacific partnership, for the establishment of the “Green Bridge” office in close cooperation with ESCAP, ECE and other interested parties, which will also provide information dissemination and media activities during the implementation of the Initiative, taking into account the priorities of the national green development programme of Kazakhstan, Zhasyl Damu. At present, Kazakhstan is focused on two priority components within thematic areas one and two, namely:

- (a) Eco-efficient use of water resources and ecosystems;
- (b) Low-carbon development and adaptation to climate change.

## **VII. Recommendations**

34. Based on the thematic and policy areas proposed above, and to stimulate the further greening of the economy and the growth of the Asian and Pacific region through the implementation of the Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative, the ministers may wish to:

- (a) Endorse the establishment of a programme of Europe-Asia-Pacific partnership as a mechanism for the implementation of the Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative;

- (b) Endorse the functions of the partnership, which are to provide a forum for dialogue among European, Asian and Pacific countries and to identify priorities, strategies and policies for furthering sustainable development in preparation for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, to be held in 2012, as well as during the preparatory process for the seventh Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe”, to be held in 2011;

- (c) Support the holding of the first meeting of the partnership in Kazakhstan and the development by the meeting of the proposed follow-up activities, as well as a two-year work programme;

- (d) Request the Government of Kazakhstan, in partnership with the Governments of France, Germany, the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea and Kiribati to present a Europe-Asia-Pacific partnership and the Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative at the seventh Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe”, to be held in Astana in 2011;

- (e) Encourage ESCAP members and associate members to make a determined and concerted effort to assist in the implementation of the Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative.

## **II. Proceedings of the Conference**

### **A. Ministerial round table: Building bridges for Low Carbon Green Growth: Developing One Regional Voice in Preparation for the Sustainable Development Summit, Brazil, 2012**

(Agenda item 4)

1. The round table featured eminent speakers, such as H.E. Ms. Khempheng Pholsena, Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, H.E. Mr. Hameed Ullah Jan Afridi, Minister of Environment of Pakistan, H.E. Mr. Lee Maanee, Minister of



Environment of the Republic of Korea, and H.E. Mr. Nickel Lee Hang, Minister of Finance of Samoa. It was moderated by the Executive Secretary of ESCAP, who, in her opening remarks, emphasized the fact that disparities remained despite economic progress in many countries of the region, and some countries were not on track to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, signs that changes in the approach to development were required. H.E. Mr. Karim Kazhymkanovich Massimov, Prime Minister of Kazakhstan, pointed out that climate change was one of the most significant challenges for all countries, and that many were revising traditional development policies. The Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative of the Government of Kazakhstan was highlighted, as was the need for regional cooperation to achieve sustainable development.

2. During the course of the discussion, the Vice-Chairman of the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and the following delegations took the floor: Iran (Islamic Republic of) Samoa<sup>31</sup> and Timor-Leste.

3. The discussions centred on national programmes of sustainable development and on mainstreaming environmental concerns into national development policies and expressed interest in developing a stronger voice for Asia and the Pacific.

## **B. Policy perspectives in the Asian and Pacific region**

(Agenda item 5)

4. The following delegations took the floor: Afghanistan; Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Brunei Darussalam; Cambodia; China; Fiji; India; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Kiribati;<sup>32</sup> Kyrgyzstan; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Maldives; Mongolia; Nepal; Pakistan; Republic of Korea; Singapore; Sri Lanka; Tajikistan; Thailand; Timor-Leste; Turkmenistan; and Uzbekistan. The following organizations also addressed the meeting: Asian Development Bank (ADB), Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

## **C. The multi-stakeholder round table on “the pursuit of inclusive and sustainable development – engaging stakeholders”**

5. The multi-stakeholder round table on the theme “the pursuit of inclusive and sustainable development – engaging stakeholders” was moderated by Mr. Rae Kwon Chung, Director of the Environment and Development Division of ESCAP and featured representatives of side and parallel events held during the Conference. The panellists were H.E. Ms. Bakhyt Sultanov, Special Economic Advisor to the President of Kazakhstan; Ms. Nicola Steuer, Programme Director, New Economics Foundation; Mr. Surendra Shrestha, Director of Strategic Resource Mobilization, UNEP, representing the Rio+20 preparatory process; Mr. Masanori Kobayashi, Senior Coordinator APFED, IGES; Mr. Thomas Schneider, Chief Executive Officer and President of ISA Industrial Ltd.; Mr. Daniele Ponzi, Lead Environment Specialist, ADB; Mr. Young-Woo Park, Director and Representative, UNEP/ROAP; and Dr. Marta Bonifert, Executive Director of the Regional Environmental Center (REC) for

<sup>31</sup> On behalf of Pacific small island developing States.

<sup>32</sup> On behalf of Pacific small island developing States.

Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Those events provided a unique platform for wide stakeholder discussions and deliberations on the main themes of the Conference and resulted in constructive recommendations to policymakers on the way forward to advancing the green growth and sustainable development agendas in the Asian and Pacific region. The summary of the conclusions and recommendations was distributed at the Conference and would be posted on the website of ESCAP.

#### **D. Consideration of the report of the senior officials**

(Agenda item 6)

6. The Conference endorsed the recommendations contained in the report of the senior officials (E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/9).

#### **E. Other matters**

(Agenda item 7)

7. The Conference noted that various side and parallel events had been held.

#### **F. Adoption of the ministerial declaration, the regional implementation plan for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific, 2011-2015, supportive initiatives and the report of the Conference**

(Agenda item 8)

8. The Conference adopted the Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2010 (see chap. I, sect. A).

9. The Conference also adopted the Regional Implementation Plan for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2011-2015 (see chap. I, sect. B). It recommended that appropriate steps be taken to implement the Plan at the regional, subregional and national levels, noting that the Plan should also provide guidance to the ESCAP, its partners, and other interested parties in providing support for countries in the region.

10. The Conference welcomed and endorsed the Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative of the Government of Kazakhstan (see chap. I, sect. C) as an outcome of the Conference. The Conference called on the international donor community and the private sector to support the implementation of the Initiative. It also requested the secretariat to take the necessary action to support its implementation as an interregional initiative.

11. The Conference also requested that ESCAP assist the countries of the region by providing technical assistance in the execution of the Regional Implementation Plan for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2011-2015, and national environmental strategies and action. It emphasized that regional and subregional cooperation would be required to identify and share appropriate and tested policy solutions and would complement the efforts of member countries.

12. In the light of the significance of the challenges faced by the region and the role of the Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific as a forum for constructive dialogue and for formulating specific follow-up related to those challenges, the

Conference requested the Executive Secretary of ESCAP to convene the seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific in 2015, pursuant to paragraph 6 of the Ministerial Declaration. At that meeting, the final review report on the implementation of the Regional Implementation Plan should be submitted.

13. The sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific adopted the present report on 2 October 2010.

### **III. Organization of the Conference**

#### **A. Opening, duration and organization**

14. The Meeting was opened by H.E. Mr. Karim Kazhymkanovich Massimov, Prime Minister of Kazakhstan.

15. The special message of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the Conference was delivered by the Executive Secretary of ESCAP. In his statement, the Secretary-General noted the significant growth rates of economies in the Asian and Pacific region despite the Asian financial crisis of 1997 and the recent triple (food, fuel and financial) crisis. The Secretary-General pointed out, however, that more work was needed to assist the hundreds of millions of people who still lived in poverty, without access to water, sanitation, health or education. He stressed that development and environment needed to be addressed simultaneously and praised countries that had taken steps to implement green growth approaches since the Conference's previous session, in 2005. He expressed the hope that, at the upcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the Asian and Pacific region could show the way for developing countries all over the world and usher in a new era of sustainable development.

16. In her opening remarks, the Executive Secretary of ESCAP expressed gratitude to the Government of Kazakhstan for generously hosting the Conference and for the excellent hospitality shown. Highlighting that the Conference had gathered a record number of ministers, she proceeded to underline some of the region's challenges with respect to poverty, inequality, access to water, electricity and sanitation, urban development and natural disasters. To respond to those challenges, she said, the region needed to depart from the development path of growing first and cleaning up later. Changes needed to be made to both physical infrastructure and the socio-economic underpinnings of the economy. The Executive Secretary highlighted the strong political support and mutually supportive partnerships that were needed to achieve that transformation. She noted that the ESCAP secretariat could assist member States by documenting and transferring concrete policies, undertaking research and developing national and regional road maps.

17. The Prime Minister of Kazakhstan extended a warm welcome to participants in the Conference, which he noted was an important forum for Kazakhstan and for the whole region. Noting the efforts by his Government to promote international, in particular regional and interregional, cooperation in the area of sustainable development, he informed the Conference of the forthcoming summit of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference, which would be held in Astana in 2011. He highlighted the great importance of strengthening Eurasian cooperation, bearing in mind common environmental challenges in both regions. In that regard, he

highlighted the Zhasyl Damu “green development” initiative being implemented in his country. The Prime Minister expressed his wishes for a successful Conference.

## **B. Attendance**

18. The Ministerial Conference was attended by the following members and associate members of ESCAP: Afghanistan; Armenia, Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Brunei Darussalam; Cambodia; China, Fiji; Georgia; India; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Kazakhstan; Kiribati; Kyrgyzstan; Lao People’s Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Maldives; Marshall Islands; Mongolia; Myanmar; Nauru; Nepal; Pakistan; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Samoa; Singapore; Sri Lanka; Tajikistan; Thailand; Timor-Leste; Tonga; Turkey; Turkmenistan; Tuvalu; United States of America; Uzbekistan; Vanuatu; and Viet Nam.

19. Observers from the Czech Republic, Germany and Switzerland were present.

20. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies also attended: United Nations Economic Commission for Europe; United Nations Environment Programme; United Nations Development Programme; United Nations Industrial Development Organization; World Health Organization; and World Meteorological Organization.

21. Representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations also attended: Asian Development Bank; European Union; and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

22. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations, other entities and observers also attended: Society for Conservation and Protection of Environment; Global Green Growth Institute; Institute for Global Environmental Strategies; Commonwealth of Independent States; and Eurasian Economic Community Secretariat of the Integration Committee.

## **C. Election of officers**

23. The Conference elected the following officers:

(a) Chairperson:

H.E. Ms. Eldana Sadvakassova (Kazakhstan)

(b) Vice-Chairpersons:

H.E. Mr. Novruz Guliyev (Azerbaijan)

H.E. Mr. Mohammed Hasan Mahmud (Bangladesh)

H.E. Mr. Pema Gyamtsho (Bhutan)

H.E. Mr. Pehin Dato Suyoi Haji Osman (Brunei Darussalam)

H.E. Mr. Khong Sam Nuon (Cambodia)

H.E. Mr. Ilyas Asaad (Indonesia)

H.E. Mr. Muhammad Javad Mohammadi Zadeh  
(Islamic Republic of Iran)

H.E. Mr. Reza Maknoon (Islamic Republic of Iran)

H.E. Mr. Ghorban Seifi (Islamic Republic of Iran)

H.E. Mr. Hikaru Kobayashi (Japan)

H.E. Mr. Natan Teewe (Kiribati)  
 H.E. Ms. Khempheng Pholsena  
 (Lao People's Democratic Republic)  
 H.E. Mr. Aslam Mohamed Shakir (Maldives)  
 H.E. Mr. Akram Kamaludeen (Maldives)  
 H.E. Mr. Mattlan Zackhras (Marshall Islands)  
 H.E. Mr. Luvsandash Zorig (Mongolia)  
 H.E. Mr. Luvsandoo Dashpurev (Mongolia)  
 H.E. Mr. Min Thein (Myanmar)  
 H.E. Mr. Riddel Akua (Nauru)  
 H.E. Mr. Dominic Tabuna (Nauru)  
 H.E. Mr. Dinesh Chandra Devkota (Nepal)  
 H.E. Mr. Hameed Ullah Jan Afridi (Pakistan)  
 H.E. Ms. Margarita Songco (Philippines)  
 H.E. Mr. Lee Maanee (Republic Korea)  
 H.E. Mr. Mikhail N. Bocharnikov (Russian Federation)  
 H.E. Mr. Nickel Lee Hang (Samoa)  
 H.E. Mr. Anura Priyadharshana Yapa Appuhamillage  
 (Sri Lanka)  
 H.E. Mr. Chalernpol Thanchitt (Thailand)  
 H.E. Mr. Rui Manuel Hanjam (Timor-Leste)  
 H.E. Mr. Abilio de Deus de Jesus Lima (Timor-Leste)  
 H.E. Mr. Francisco da Costa Soares (Timor-Leste)  
 H.E. Mr. Makhtumkuli Akmuradov (Turkmenistan)  
 H.E. Mr. Aunese Makoi Simati (Tuvalu)  
 H.E. Mr. Paul Telukluk (Vanuatu)  
 H.E. Mr. Bui Cach Tuyen (Viet Nam)

(c) Rapporteur:

Mr. Mohammed Shaheduzzaman, Bangladesh

## D. Agenda

24. The Conference adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the Conference.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda.
4. Ministerial round table.
5. Policy perspectives in the Asian and Pacific region.
6. Consideration of the report of the senior officials.
7. Other matters.
8. Adoption of the Ministerial Declaration, the Regional Implementation Plan for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2011-2015, supportive initiatives and the report of the Conference.
9. Closing of the Conference.

## Annex

### List of documents

Document symbol	Title	Agenda item <sup>a</sup>
<i>General series</i>		
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/1 and Corr.1	Sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific: trends, challenges, opportunities, and policy perspectives	2
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/2	Progress in the implementation of the recommendations of the fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific (2005)	3(a)
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/3	Progress in the implementation of the Seoul Initiative on Green Growth	3(b)
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/4 and Corr.1	Review of the implementation of the Kitakyushu Initiative for a Clean Environment	3(c)
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/5 and Corr.1	Emerging challenges and trends in water resources management	4
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/6	Emerging challenges and trends in energy resources management	4
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/7	Emerging challenges in inclusive and sustainable urban development in Asia and the Pacific	4
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/8	Investment in the sustainable management of natural resources: emerging opportunities and policies	4
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/9	Report of the senior officials	12
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/10	Note verbale dated 11 August 2010 from the Diplomatic Mission of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the Kingdom of Thailand addressed to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific	7
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/11	Ministerial declaration on environment and development in Asia and the Pacific, 2010	14
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/12	Regional Implementation Plan for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2011-2015	14
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/13	Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative: Europe-Asia-Pacific Partnership for the Implementation of “Green Growth”	14
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/14	Report of the sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific	14
<i>Limited series</i>		
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/L.1/Rev.1	Revised annotated provisional agenda	1
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/L.2	Draft report of the Conference	
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/L.3	Draft ministerial declaration on environment and development in Asia and the Pacific, 2010	14

Document symbol	Title	Agenda item <sup>a</sup>
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/L.4	Draft regional implementation plan for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific, 2011-2015	14
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/L.5/Rev.1	Draft Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative: Europe-Asia-Pacific Partnership for the implementation of “Green Growth”	7
<i>Working paper series</i>		
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/WP.1/Rev.1	Draft ministerial declaration on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2010	5
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/WP.2	Draft regional implementation plan for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific, 2011-2015	6
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/WP.3/Rev.1	Draft report of the senior officials	9
<i>Information series</i>		
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/INF/1	Information for participants	
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/INF/2	Provisional list of participants	
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/INF/2/Rev.1	List of participants	
E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/INF/3	Tentative programme	

<sup>a</sup> See E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/L.1/Rev.1.